

The COMMUNIST

"All Power to the Workers!"

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF AMERICA

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New Offensive Against Soviet Russia

Proclamation by the Amsterdam Bureau of the Communist International

TO THE WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES

THE International Conference of the Communists at Amsterdam has warned you already in February: World capital is preparing another attack on Soviet-Russia. Behind the peace negotiations and commercial relations there lurks a treacherous aggression.

This new offensive has now begun in the far East. Japan has concentrated a big army and has taken the offensive. It announces in the world-press that its army is strong enough to annihilate also the reinforcements on their way to the Red Armies to defend the workers' soviets.

In the meantime Poland is preparing for a gigantic struggle. Already it has accomplished a move eastward and has in agreement with the Entente advanced such demands as everybody knows to be absolutely unacceptable. French and American war material continues to be piled up in Poland.

The Finnish minister of foreign affairs negotiates in London, and Finland will be granted the special honor of attacking Petrograd, whilst Poland advances towards Moscow and Petlura towards Kiev.

But the German counter-revolution too must be considered in this light. Up to this day the secret understanding between English diplomats and Kapp has not been explained. Even now the Entente does not demand the disarmament of the "Junkers", but supports the disarmament of the workers. Already a new "coup" is being prepared by the German military band of robbers and both Austria and Hungary are about to initiate a monarchy by an attack on Russia. Regents of the Entente have already negotiated about the compensations to be allowed to Hungary for attacking the Bolsheviks. Only the wilfully blind can believe in peace.

Workers! the fate of the world is now to be decided, enslavement or freedom.

Financial capital cannot forget that it had to acknowledge an initial defeat at the hands of Soviet-Russia.

This new and last effort will surpass everything in ruthlessness and cruelty. In this contingency the revolutionary spirit of our Polish comrades is the vulnerable spot of world-capital. Will they allow themselves to be led into misery and death for the sake of their exploiters?

Not if the German proletariat gives them hope of a support from the rear, if there is a chance left of Soviets in Western Europe coming to the rescue of their brothers in the East. This is why the German reaction must be helped to regain power, under Ebert-Noske if possible, under Kapp-Ludendorff if necessary, so as to protect Poland in the rear and to provide troops for a second attack if the first onslaught should break upon the unflinching courage of our Russian friends.

This is why France must make haste to occupy German cities with black troops, for though Germany will be allowed to act as executioner, France will not let go their prey and the industrial proletarians of Western Germany continue to constitute a danger for the Polish adventure.

And in the meantime the comedy of Polish negotiations continues in Borisoff; the most competent leaders of Russian economic life are invited to Western Europe for "the beginning of commercial relations"; committees of research (or rather for counterrevolutionary espionage) are talked about.

Workers! all this is so monstrous that you hesitate to believe it. But the offensive has already begun. The attack had to begin in the East in order that a strong Japanese army might be able to draw Russian troops away from the western frontier. And this beginning has not been made. In due time alarm will be sounded in the capitalist press of the whole world about a Russian offensive against Poland and Finland, and Eng-

land has already promised its full support to all the border states in such an event. Have we then really learned nothing during these five years and a half from the monotonous lies of our adversaries? Do the workers even now not understand that Soviet-Russia, the Russia of the workers and the poor peasants, wishes to live in peace, must wish to thing in order to secure peace? Must we needs again and again believe our live in peace and does literally every-enemies and betray our friends?

The proletariat the world over will have to answer now so as to show its determination to prevent this crime.

The Amsterdam Bureau of the Communist International appeals to all workers and to the transport-workers in the very first place to boycott all ships and goods from and for Japan, as long as the policy of intervention in Siberia is maintained. Classconscious workers should not touch any goods destined for Japan or coming from Japan, nor should they manufacture or handle or transport such goods.

Workers of Japan! We address ourselves to you in the first place. But also the American, the British, the Dutch, the Norwegian, the French, etc workers can give active support.

Such an action will show those in power that the workers are on their guard and prepared for deeds.

But this will not be enough.

We have already issued a call for a general strike of protest against intervention in Soviet-Russia on May first.

Such a protest is all all right, but it must be followed up by coercive deeds, for capital will give way to power only now that since its very existence is at stake, but... the existence of millions of workers as well.

In hatred against Soviet-Russia all capitalist states fraternally unite. Though Lloyd George never so hypocritically play the peace-maker, Britain none the less remains the

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Lenin vs. the "Majority" Group.

IN an editorial in the first issue of the "Communist" published by the "majority" group, headed "The Party in Crisis", a criticism is made of the "minority" because of its policy of establishing contact with the masses of the workers and relating the principles of Communism to their everyday struggles.

While this editorial is contradictory in parts — the author evidently fearing to clearly advocate keeping the Communist Party a sect apart from the life struggles of the workers — the true character of the opinion of the "majority" group comes out in the following paragraphs:

This cry of "contact with the masses hold in itself the seeds of future compromise, vacillation and betrayal. It is the cry of the confusionists and sentimentalists who seem to think that a Communist Party must have contact with the masses at all stages of its development. They do not see that if they attempt to run after the masses, at a time when the masses are not ready for them, they will, in their zeal, reduce Communism to a theory and practice that will meet the approval of the politically immature masses. They will compromise principles and tactics to get 'contact with the masses'.

In the London Call of April 22, there is printed a letter from Lenin to Sylvia Pankhurst, in reply to a request for advice as to the course which the English Communists should follow, in which Lenin, after again emphasizing what had been previously stated as the fundamental principles upon which all Communist groups should unite — Class struggle, Mass action, Dictatorship of the Proletariat and Soviet Organization — which the "majority" group repudiates, continues to give this advice to the English Communists:

A close contact with the masses of the workers and the ability constantly to agitate among them,

to take part in every strike and to respond to every move of the masses — such is the most important thing for a Communist Party.

"Close contact with the masses"... "To take part in every strike and to respond to EVERY MOVE OF THE MASSES — SUCH IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING FOR A COMMUNIST PARTY" says Lenin; and "this cry of 'contact with the masses' hold in itself the seeds of future compromise, vacillation and betrayal is the cry of confusionists and sentimentalists..." says the "majority" group.

According to this statement Lenin is a confusionist and sentimentalist in his advice to the English Communists, for it will be noted that Lenin does not only say that it is important for a Communist Party to maintain contact with the masses. He goes further and says that it must maintain CLOSE CONTACT and that it is MOST IMPORTANT that a Communist Party respond to every move of the masses.

The "majority" group believes that the only response that a Communist Party should make to movements of the masses is to advocate and propagate the use of force. For them a Communist Party has only this one purpose — to teach the working class that force will be necessary in order to establish the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and that everything else is to be condemned as compromise and opportunism.

This is not Communism at all. It is the perversion of the living principles of Communism into an iron dogmatism. If there is one thing that differentiates Communism from other social philosophies it is the appreciation that the facts in every given situation must be considered in applying its principles. The "majority" viewpoint would make of the Communist Party merely a conspiratorial body advocating the use of force to overthrow the existing government.

It is not at all remarkable that the men who compose the majority of the C. E. C. of the party take this viewpoint. They are incapable of playing a part in any other kind of Communist Party than such a conspiratorial body and naturally they endeavor to make the party such an organization.

With this view of Communism and the functions of a Communist Party the "minority" will never agree. The "minority" view of the functions of a Communist Party is that expressed by Lenin. It must establish close contact with the masses. It must take part in every strike. It must respond to every move of the masses. It must be the living incarnation of the class struggle, leading and guiding the workers, winning their confidence by participating in all their struggles, developing mass action in its various phases as the revolutionary consciousness of the masses develops, to

the final revolutionary struggle for power.

The "majority" group fears that the sacred principles of Communism will become sullied through such participation in the movements of the masses. This is the fear of the religionists who do not even dare discuss their religion for fear that it may lose its glamour in contact with the facts of life. They would hug their breasts and wait for the social their sacred "principles" to their breasts and wait for the social revolution.

We will have none of that, comrades of the "majority". Your Communism may be of such fragile character that you dare not risk it in the actual struggle of the workers. We have no fear about our principles. We are ready to apply these principles and carry on the fight in accordance with these principles. If they cannot stand the test of application in the present struggles of the workers they had better be discarded. We believe that the principles upon which our movement is founded can stand this test. We do not believe that contact with the masses means compromise. That is the viewpoint of those who would make Communism a holy creed. We believe that our party can follow Lenin's advice, that it is not necessary to sacrifice action in order to maintain purity of principles. It is because you are weak that you fear to risk your principles in action. WE INTEND TO MAKE THE COMMUNIST PARTY BOTH A PARTY OF ACTION AND A PARTY OF UNCOMPROMISING ADHERENCE TO PRINCIPLES.

As to Party Funds

MUCH ado is being made by the "Majority" group of the fact that the Executive Secretary of the party, according to their view, "walked off with the party funds."

The Executive Secretary of the party was elected by a party convention. His responsibility is to a convention of the party, and when the split between the two factions in the party was impending the Executive Secretary served notice that in the event of such a split he would continue to administer his office and conduct his work, making his report, financial and other otherwise, to the party convention.

There is, too, another fact to be considered in connection with the funds of the party. At the time the split took place there was under the control of the Executive Secretary \$6,328.32. Of this amount approximately \$4800.00 was due Chicago comrades, who had loaned this sum to the party for the purpose of publishing literature and for defense work. These loans had been guaranteed by the personal pledge of the Executive Secretary that the sums would be repaid promptly.

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Agreement for a Unity Conference

Between the Communist Party and Communist Labor Party.

THE following agreement for a Unity Conference between the two organizations has been reached:

In harmony with the position of the Third International that all parties which agree on the following fundamental principles shall unite:

1. Class war of the workers without compromise with bourgeois and social patriotic parties.
2. Mass action of the working class as the means to conquer power.
3. Dictatorship of the proletariat.
4. Soviet constitution as the proper basis of Proletarian Democracy.

The Communist Party and the Communist Labor Party agree to meet in Unity Conference called for the purpose of uniting the two parties. The basis of this conference shall be:

1. The principles of Communism as stated in the Manifesto and Program of the Communist Party are accepted as the basic principles upon which the two parties are in agreement.
2. Each party shall call a national convention which shall resolve themselves into a Unity Conference for the purpose of discussing unity between the two parties. Until unity is agreed upon, the delegates of each party shall vote as separate units and decisions must be reached by agreement.
3. If, in such preliminary discussion, an agreement for uniting the two groups of delegates is reached, then the delegates from the two parties shall unite and proceed with the work of adopting a Manifesto, Program and Constitution and the election of officers for the united party.
4. In order to facilitate the work of the Unity Conference a Joint Committee consisting of three members from each party shall meet one week before the convention to draft a Manifesto, Program and Constitution to be submitted to the Unity Conference.
5. It is understood that each party assumes the obligation to meet the expenses of its delegates. Should the two parties unite into one convention this obligation will be assumed by the united party.
6. Arrangements for the Unity Conference shall

be made jointly by the Executive Secretary of the Communist Party and the Executive Secretary of the Communist Labor Party.

7. It is understood by both parties that the method of electing delegates is to be by membership action and is to be conducted secretly.

—o—

The above agreement for a Unity Conference places the question of unity in the hands of the delegates — which will be elected by the Communist Party and the Communist Labor Party membership.

If these delegates find that they are agreed on the fundamental principles which are to be expressed in the program of the united party, the two bodies of delegates will be united with such proportional representation as is included in their agreement.

The preliminary conference between the two groups of delegates will furnish the best opportunity for the discussion of principles that has taken place in the Communist movement of this country thus far. There was no discussion of fundamental principles in the Communist Party convention in Chicago. Everything was cut and dried — settled in advance by caucus action — and the work of the convention was purely mechanical. Even the challenge of the Michiganites was overridden by votes and not by showing by argument that they were wrong.

It is not through such a convention that real agreement and understanding on fundamentals can be secured. There must be discussion and debate on all points in our program, so that if there is disagreement the issues are made and a decision is reached understandingly, not merely by swallowing what a caucus has decided in advance.

The fact that there have been two parties claiming to be Communist parties has been one of the things that prevented the development of a strong Communist movement in this country thus far. While the result of this Unity Conference may still leave a faction of the Communist Party outside of the United Communist Party, — this faction will not live long as a separate organization, but will soon be absorbed by the united party.

This Unity Conference opens the way for the reorganization of the Communists in a party that will be a real party of understanding and action.

DAVID DAMON, Executive Secretary.

The Coming Elections

Theses Proposed by Louis C. Fraina for Discussion and Action by the Communist Party.

(Ed. Note:—The following article was received from Berlin, and goes to press without discussion of its proposals. This is an individual view of the author who, obviously, can hardly have a definite and realistic conception of the Communist situation in the United States at this moment.)

1—The savage Government repression of the Communist Party, together with the revolutionary requirements of the general situation, impose three chief and immediate tasks upon the Party:

a) The development of forms of Party organization and means of Party activity enabling the Communist Party to function in spite of the Government repression.

b) More intensive activity in the unions by means of developing extra-union organizations, such as the Workers' Councils, to carry on the

struggle against the reactionary union bureaucracy and organizations, and for industrial unionism; together with the parallel activity of organizing direct branches of the Communist Party in the shops, mills and mines.

c) The struggle to make the Communist Party an active force in the political life of the nation, and particularly in the coming elections.

2—The coming elections, in a national and international sense, in the discussion of vital issues and the revealing of class alignments, are of the utmost importance. The Government repression of the Communist movement; the proposed legislation against strikes and revolutionary activity; the coming of trades unionism to the political struggle (Labor Party); the problems of nationalization and the cost of living; the League of Nations and the Peace Treaty; the relations of the United

States to the Russian Soviet Republic in particular and the European revolution in general; — all these are questions that must compel a clear, definite expression of class relations and class interests, and that provide a rare opportunity for Communist Party agitation.

3—The Communist Party must participate in the coming elections actively and aggressively, and bend all its resources to that end. Under the prevailing conditions, the revolutionary use of parliamentarism becomes, for the American Communist Party, not the use of the parliament (Congress, Legislatures), but the use of the political campaigns for purposes of revolutionary agitation. The prospects of electing representatives are nil; the prospects of agitation in campaigns — excellent. The Party must act accordingly.

4—The Communist Party will participate in the coming campaign on the basis of its revolutionary program. There must be no concessions to immediate demands on the capitalist state; on the contrary, these demands, such as nationalization, must

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The American S. P. and the International

To the Executive Committee of the sub-Bureau of the Communist International.

Comrades:—

The Socialist Party of the United States has decided to affiliate with the Communist International, and has made application accordingly to G. Zinoviev. In considering this application, the following points should be borne in mind:

1—The mere decision to affiliate with the Communist International is in itself of small value: the decisive factor is acceptance, in theory and practice, of Communist fundamentals.

2—The resolution of the American Socialist Party in favor of affiliating with the Communist International is silent concerning acceptance of the principles and tactics of the International. At the last National Convention of the Party, August 30, 1919 (at which, incidentally, the expulsion of 40,000 Communists from the Party was overwhelmingly approved) mass action, Soviets and proletarian dictatorship as means of Revolution were rejected, the Socialist Party evading every actual problem of revolutionary theory and practice.

3—The policy of the Socialist Party is completely dominated by the conception of parliamentary conquest of Capitalism. The Party is not revolutionary; on the contrary, it is shamelessly opportunist; its tactics are comprised in dependence upon petty bourgeois democracy, parliamentarism, reformism, and co-operation with the liberals and the reactionary trades unions.

4—The revolutionary elements in the Socialist Party have either been expelled or have seceded — of the former Party membership, approximately 50,000 are now in the Communist Party and 15,000 in the Communist Labor Party, and less than 30,000 are still in the Socialist Party. The Socialist Party now consists wholly of the Right and the Centre: opportunists and reformists, all. The dominant personages in the Socialist Party are: Morris Hillquit, an unprincipled, refined opportunist of the Longuet type; Victor L. Berger, a social-patriot who, in 1913, urged that the United States should conquer and annex Mexico; Seymour Stedman, a typical petty bourgeois radical, who, upon the expulsion of 40,000 Communists from the Party, declared in a capitalist newspaper: "The Socialist Party has been purged of the Bolsheviks;" Meyer London, who, as a member of Congress, supported the war and was not expelled from the Party; Algernon Lee, who, while a member of the New York City Board of Aldermen, voted to promote the sale of Liberty (war) Bonds and urged war against Germany "in order to save the Russian Revolution"! All the leaders who represented the Socialist Party as a

typical party of the old International are still dominant: there has been a purge of the Communists, but not of the opportunists, of the Right and Centre.

5—The Socialist Party prides itself upon having declared against the war. a) The revolutionists largely responsible for the anti-war declaration are now out of the Party. b) The Party's official policy, as expressed by the leaders who are now still dominant in the Socialist Party, was one of petty bourgeois pacifism and miserable opportunism.

6—The Socialist Party wages a strong campaign against intervention in Russia and for recognition of the Russian Soviet Government; but this campaign is scarcely distinguishable from the campaign of the petty bourgeois radicals.

7—Five Socialist Party representatives elected to the Legislature of the State of New York have been denied their seats by the Legislature. The Socialists' defense at their trial had three aspects: a) that constitutional government and democracy are menaced by the act of the Legislature; b) that the Socialist Party has no connection with the Communists; c) that it is not true the Socialist Party aims to establish a Soviet Republic in the United States, since favoring the Russian Soviet Republic "does not mean proposing, or even dreaming, that a system which develops naturally from Russia's material conditions is adaptable to a highly complex economic system such as that of the United States."

8—The Government's savage campaign of repression against the Communists does not involve the Socialist Party. In a declaration issued January 23, 1920, justifying the repressive campaign of the Department of Justice, Attorney General Palmer said: "Certainly such an organization as the Communist Party of America and the Communist Labor Party cannot be construed to fall within the same category as the Socialist Party of America, which latter organization is pledged to the accomplishment of changes in the Government by lawful and rightful means."

9—The National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party, in session March 8, 1920 (two months after the decision to affiliate with the Communist International) revealed three significant facts:

a) That a number of trades unions had been invited to send delegates to the Party Convention of May 8 — indicating that the Socialist Party is merging more completely in reactionary craft unionism.

b) That a demonstration for political prisoners was being arranged together with the Freedom Foundation and the National Civil Liberties Bureau — indicating the Socialist Party's co-operation and affiliation with petty bourgeois radicals.

c) That Jean Longuet was to speak in the United States under the auspices of the Party — indicating the opportunist and centrist character of the Socialist Party's international affiliations.

10—Historically, the Socialist Party developed as the American expression of the opportunism and reformism which became dominant in the Second International at the close of the 19th Century; the Party represented and still represents moderate petty bourgeois Socialism. The decision of this Party to affiliate with the Communist International is the product of two factors: a) Undefined sympathy of the Party membership with the Russian Revolution and the Soviet Republic; the Communist International being identified with the Soviet Republic and a means of assisting this Republic, instead of as a means of revolutionary struggle and the reconstruction of Socialism. b) The "diplomacy" of a miserable Left-Centre in the Socialist Party, which considers it a "clever stroke" to affiliate with the Communist International, imagining that this might impair the power of the Communist Party of America.

The admission of the American Socialist Party to the Communist International would be a serious blow to the American Communist movement, and to the International itself.

A serious and menacing situation now prevails in the Communist International. The old International is broken in pieces: in this, the Communist International has performed a magnificent task of destruction; but the Communist International has not yet performed the constructive task of organizing itself on a definite basis. All sorts of parties and groups formerly affiliated with the old International, and which have not purged themselves of the Centre and the Right, are asking admission to the Communist International; for our International to admit these undesirable elements would mean reconstituting the Second International under the name of Communist International. The situation is dangerous and requires immediate and uncompromising action.

In the name of the Communist Party of America, accordingly, I call for the rejection of the application of the American Socialist Party for admission to the Communist International; and that, pending final action by the Executive Committee in Moscow (or a Congress of the International), the sub-Bureau of the International shall not enter into any relations with the American Socialist Party.

LOUIS C. FRAINA

International Secretary, C. P. A.
Berlin—March 30, 1920.

Statement by Chicago District Committee

To the Members of the Communist Party

Comrades:—

The attempt made by the majority of the Central Executive Committee, in the name of party discipline, to disrupt the Chicago District Organization, precipitated a collision between the aggressive rank and file of the Communist Party and the hollow phrase mongers who have stultified our organization by a policy of inaction.

Since the formation of the Communist Party not a single plank of the party program has been developed. Much less than being taken as a basis for action, not one plank of the program has even been discussed by the C. E. C. None of the most important tactical problems before the Communist movement of the country has been solved or even seriously considered. The Communist Party became stagnant because its central body has never shown the necessary initiative and ability to develop the party policy; or to build up an organization, except as the party took over bodily previously developed units of organization. The membership has never been presented with the chance to study the party problems, nor given any channels for expression of views.

Does the party program fulfil itself? Making a pamphlet out of the party manifesto and program is not the building of a Communist Party. **This program must be brought to life in the class struggle in the United States.**

Mass Action.

The members of the party clearly understood that the manifesto and program adopted at Chicago were conceived in the understanding of mass action; that **"the Communist Party prepares itself for the revolution in the measure that it develops a program of immediate action, expressing the mass struggles of the proletariat."**

The "immediate action" promised by the program has never been initiated by the C. E. C., whose watchword was inaction. This body devoted little of its thought and time to the mass struggles of the American proletariat which, according to the program, must be developed into revolutionary mass action for the conquest of the state power. This must be done, as the program points out, through political campaigns based on revolutionary propaganda, mass strikes, shop agitation, industrial unionism, workers' councils, workers' control of industry, unionization of the unskilled and of the agricultural laborers, organization of the negroes, propaganda and action against militarism, internationalization of proletarian thought and action.

Now, after eight months of silence and inactivity, we are presented by the majority group of the C. E. C. (in their issue of "The Communist") with an explanation of mass action which directly denies the essence of the party program. They deny that "the Communist Party is fundamentally a party of action." They say that our party "cannot afford to attempt to get contact with the masses" because "one must beware of the danger that lies in trying to come to the masses at a time when the masses are not receptive to the message of Communism."

If, as it would thus appear, the party program is a betrayal of mass action, how is it that this majority of the C. E. C. has managed to maintain complete silence about it until this time?

Did not the Russian Bolsheviks approach the masses of Russian workers for the purpose of developing their struggles into revolutionary mass action long before these workers were receptive to the message of Communism? Are the real Bolsheviks not trying at the present moment to come to the masses of Chinese, Hindu and other Asiatic workers, or are these workers to be considered more "receptive to the message of Communism" than the American workers?

For what purpose did we adopt our program at Chicago? To make a dialectical play of revolutionary phrases, or to lay down the guiding principles for a Communist Party activity in developing revolutionary mass action?

The majority of the C. E. C. is afraid to test the principles of Communism in action because, in their opinion, contact with the masses will endanger these principles. The truth is that they are an impotent group of talkers who never could organize a party of the revolutionary proletariat. They only come out of their hiding places to foment prejudice, suspicion and strife within our ranks, depending upon phrase-heroism and upon cheap appeals to nationalistic prejudice. Joined by a handful of sentimental adventurers, who seek emotional thrills in "strong" phrases, the politicians of the C. E. C. do not hesitate to destroy the essential meaning of the most vital tactical concept in the world proletarian movement.

There is not now and never has been an issue within our party on the question of the part of force in the proletarian revolution. If the question was avoided at the Chicago convention, assuming that the party then had something to say upon this subject, that could only be the fault of this same group which dominated the C. E. C., since it was the same group which largely controlled the convention. A Communist Party must teach the necessity of the use of force in the proletarian revolution, the inevitability of armed conflict between the workers and the capitalist state, but this teaching must not be allowed to be confused with terrorist anarchism, a stressing of force as of unique virtue in the revolutionary propaganda and conflict. What we must stress, now and always, is Communist understanding; and conscious organization along the lines most suitable for the revolutionary struggle and also for the Communist reconstruction, as the industrial unions, shop committees, workers' councils, etc.

Communist Party and Industrial Unionism.

One who reads our party program, however superficially must discover that its major concern is with the development of political action through strikes. More than half the program — by far the most important sections — lays down a basis for party action through strikes. Industrial unionism is emphasized above everything else as the organization basis for militant industrial mass action in the United States.

Where is there any least indication that our C. E. C. ever concerned itself with the fulfilment of this crucially important part of our program? Even in half a year, if it be answered that the time was short, was it too much for the C. E. C. ever once to look at the party program at least for the purpose of initiating a discussion of the basic party problems? There were many, many days, at the cost of hundreds of dollars, to discuss over and over again the question of one man going to Europe in addition to the International Secretary, to discuss aimlessly the logical correctness of the Russian Federation demands of last year for the control of the Martens Bureau, but there was no time to discuss the party policy as to industrial unionism and strikes!

This majority of the C. E. C. has the nerve to assert that Communist "principles" are only safe in its hands, when it is glaringly clear that its only conception of "principles" is an empty playing with phrases.

Nothing has been done. Even the question known to be foremost in the minds of so many of our members, the question of the relation of our party to the I. W. W., has been ignored by the C. E. C.

How can we develop a political consciousness in the industrial movement without Communist permeation of the labor movement? That is what we mean by action, that the party members shall function as Communists in the shops and unions,

not merely that a committee shall make plans for the revolution.

Whatever else is to be said about the I. W. W., there can be no question but that it is an organization of potential revolutionary character, a primary medium for Communist agitation. It will become Communist in expression only by compulsion of Communist understanding in the I. W. W. rank and file. The way to develop this is for our members to join the I. W. W., wherever.

The Socialist policy of "boring from within" the A. F. of L. was vicious in that it was only an indirect and hypocritical method of supporting an inherently reactionary labor organization. A Communist who must belong to the A. F. of L. on account of absolute job necessity should seize every opportunity to voice his hostility to this organization, not to reform it but to crush it, because its basic character is counter-revolutionary. Opposition to the A. F. of L. must not be purely negative, as it has heretofore been in our party propaganda. The I. W. W. is the obvious, compelling medium for giving our advocacy of industrial unionism an affirmative character. We must hold up the I. W. W. as against the A. F. of L.; we must help build a stronger I. W. W. at the same time as we carry on our work of Communist education within the I. W. W.

The Russian Bolsheviks have helped build the class-conscious workers' unions in their country, penetrated into them and make them a medium for revolutionary political propaganda, but the American parody of Bolshevism — the majority C. E. C. group — isolated the party from the industrial movement in this country, paralyzed every initiative of the membership in this respect, showed a determined hostility to every action compelled by the party program with regard to industrial unionism and participation in strikes.

Communist Party and Parliamentarism

Our party program is clear in the general appreciation of parliamentary action. The program says: "Participation in parliamentary campaigns, which in the general struggle of the proletariat is of secondary importance, is for the purpose of revolutionary propaganda only." But it is an absolutely literal truth that the C. E. C. has not spent one moment even to consider a policy of action in fulfillment of this program.

Many important events affecting Communist tactics with regard to elections have occurred since last September. We had no word to say as a party about the November elections; except to allow two or three members of Local New York to shout about a boycott of the elections, supported by the uncontrolled editorial expression of the Party Editor, on the ground that this was a time of "revolutionary conflict" unsuited for our participation in the elections. How profound was this analysis is revealed by some of these same persons defending a policy of party inaction on account of the "apathy and inertia of the masses" six months later.

We had no word to say either as to the Berger election or expulsion, although these were important occasions for developing the differences between Communist and Socialist policy. A contrast between Socialist reformism in action and no action at all is not much to brag about.

What have we said about the Albany expulsions of the Socialist Assemblymen, except as the party paper has taken account of the "yellow" defense? This affair at Albany was a political event which challenged the attention of the whole world; it was an event of highest significance for our future party policy, yet the Communist Party had no word to say about it. We have yet to say anything about the New York "exception"

legislation; we have yet to use this important episode for the anti-parliamentary and pro-soviet propaganda for which our program calls.

We have said next to nothing about the persecution of the Communist movement by American capitalism and how it shall influence our tactics. We have not used these events for analysis of the sham democracy of capitalism; for an analysis and propaganda as to the hollow mockery which the whole parliamentary system has become in the United States, particularly since the beginning of 1917. The Dictatorship of the capitalist class now openly asserts itself through dictatorial exercise of executive power, brazenly ignoring Congress as a more or less entertaining debating society. Capitalist domination even expels and excludes the toothless, cringing labor-reformist opposition from this sort of Congress, so contemptuous is it of working-class power in this country at the present time. Large masses of workers are voteless; the labor movement, even in its trade union aspects, is becoming rapidly outlawed. One of the most important items of Communist propaganda in the United States is the destruction of constitutional illusions among the American masses. Now that the Socialist Party has become the arch-supporter of these illusions, with the name of Debs to bulwark betrayal of the class struggle, the burden of the Communist Party in this vital respect is greater than ever.

There is no doubt that we must make use of the slogan: "Boycott the elections" — not because we are on the eve of revolution. We must use this slogan as a challenge to the impotence and fraud of parliamentarism. "Down with the parliaments, hail to the Soviets" — this must be our election platform. And if, as in Russia, the turn of events (by the beginning of the revolutionary class struggle) gives us the opportunity actively to enter into the elections, we must not cease to proclaim: "Down with the fraudulent democracy of capitalist rule, hail to the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and to the real democracy of a workers' communist republic."

Meanwhile, eight months have gone by of complete silence on the part of the C. E. C. in the many important election campaigns, in Seattle, Milwaukee, Davenport, New York, and a dozen other cities where "labor" campaigns have been carried on. Not a word to indicate the contrast between "laborism" and Communism; not a word to account for our non-participation in these elections.

Party Organization

Only a centralized party, closely uniting all its territorial and industrial units, can concentrate its Communist propaganda and revolutionary action in one decisive stroke of action. Only a truly centralized party can enforce real discipline and real cooperation between the executive staff and the rank and file of the organization.

The Communist Party, accurately speaking, exists as yet only in name. We have never been a party, only a rather loose federation of federations, with a few non-federation members as semi-intruders, or at best as technical agents of the Federations.

The Federations, though constituting almost the entire party membership, have done their work independently of the party and of one another. Their publications have been primarily nationalistic organs, only remotely related to the Communist Party. The C. E. C. knew nothing and dared ask nothing as to the policies and work of the Federations, until the members of the Russian Federation insisted upon an invest-

igation of the Russian Federation Executive Committee. Such an investigation, obviously, was bound to be an empty formality.

The Hungarian Federation, by vote of its central committee, quit the party because of the raids. The Lithuanian Federation Committee has had the same step under consideration, but has so far been deterred by its revolutionary rank and file. Yet we are told that the existence of Federations with such central committees is the life of the revolutionary movement in this country.

The Jewish Federation, by vote of its central body, declares its neutrality in the present party controversy — "neutrality" in a struggle which means life or death of the Communist Party! But its two members on the C. E. C. were among those who went the furthest extreme a few weeks ago to compel a party split.

The real control of the Communist Party has been in the hands of these bureaucratic Federation committees, committees in which "centralization" and "discipline" are perverted into weapons for making these Federations the political pawns of a handful of schemers. The variation in policy and fundamental understanding between these many central committees is fully as great as the differences between several parties.

We must have one centralized organization which conducts Communist propaganda in every language spoken by workers in the United States. Literature and agitation in every tongue, but only one central authority and only one party policy.

The basis of an active Communist Party must be industrial branches, the territorial and language branches to serve mainly as recruiting centres for the shop units. These primary units should be united in district organizations for the different important industrial locations, as is already the tendency in our work of party re-organization.

Within the regular party organization, but in no way independent of it, there can be full association between units of the same language, with district and national conferences as often as the work of organization and propaganda require. These language conferences can be called by the regular district or national committee upon demand of the members of the language units (who can act through delegates to district agitation committees for each language). Each nationality should be assigned a special organizer by the national office, though one organizer may be able to serve for more than one nationality. Likewise, the national organization should appoint Associate Editors who can serve the needs for propaganda in all languages, taking full account of the recommendations of the language group membership as expressed through their sub-district, district and national conferences.

All organizers and editors, regardless of language, must work under the direct supervision of the central body of the party. All publications must be under the one control. It is a silly subterfuge that only a committee of the same language can control a publication; that would be an admission that there is no possible way for the C. E. C. to control the party propaganda in a foreign language, regardless of the method of party organization.

There must be centralization also of the party finances, of technical administration generally, as of legal defense and of prisoners' relief, and as of the work of education (as yet not really begun). Dues should be uniform and, together with other receipts, should go into a single central fund to be allotted to the party work as needed. In these respects, it may well be

said that the condition within our party has been one of anarchy.

We favor democratic, not bureaucratic, organization of the party. All committees should be elected, either by direct vote or by delegates elected for this purpose. In every respect consistent with the character of the party organization, direct membership action and control of officials and policies should be maintained.

We favor also a smaller central committee to make possible more active functioning by the central body, each member of the committee to have charge, so far as able, of some special department of the party work. We suggest consideration of a committee of nine members, two of whom shall be the Executive Secretary and Party Editor.

Conclusion.

The present party controversy is not a controversy between two groups of the C. E. C., but between the conscious membership of the party and a group of incapable demagogues who have long enough succeeded in keeping the patent for the exclusive representation of Russian Bolshevism in this country.

Who are they? What do they represent? What are their deeds?

They make a great pretense about exclusive knowledge of Communist principles. But they have miserably failed to apply these principles in the living class struggle in the United States.

They demanded a Communist Party in their own image and under their special guardianship, even if to achieve this they found it necessary to disorganize the Left Wing and to unite themselves with an equally conceited group, the Detroit Proletarian group, which the C. E. C. majority expelled from the new party as non-Communist.

They helped in the creation of the Communist Party program, at least by their votes. But they do not appear even to understand this program, much less to develop it in any respect.

This group has never tolerated the least criticism of their party mismanagement and of their failure to meet the party problems. They have used the party discipline as the Cossacks use the knout, but have never applied this discipline to themselves.

It is now clear, within a month after this controversy was launched by the Chicago District Committee, that true discipline — **enforcement of the vital party policies and tactics** — is on our side, by approval of our course of action through a repudiation of the C. E. C. by the overwhelming majority of the live elements in our party. It is the C. E. C. majority which stands outlawed, because of its attempts to use membership on the C. E. C. only as a means of perpetuating clique control of the Communist Party.

We believe that enough has been indicated to make clear the fundamental character of the "revolt" against the C. E. C. majority. We are hopeful that this "revolt" is the real beginning of Communist Party history, the last stage of preparation for the beginning of a real party of Communist action in the United States.

Long live the Communist Party!

Long live the Communist International!

Fraternally submitted to all Communist Party members,

Chicago (Fifth) District Committee.

Adopted, May 14, 1920.

As to Party Funds

(Continued from page 2.)

The situation in the party was of such a character that large sections of the membership were unwilling to intrust any money to the control of the majority of the Central Executive Committee and it was only through the Executive Secretary giving his personal guarantee that the funds would be properly administered that money was paid over to the National Organization. Under these circumstances the Executive Secretary could not and would not turn the funds over to the Central Executive Committee majority, even if there were no other reasons for withholding them.

Another fact to be considered in this connection is that the greater part of the money in the hands of the Executive Secretary had come from the Chicago District. This was not only true in regard to the money loaned but the collections for dues, organization stamps and defense fund stamps in the Chicago District were nearly equal to the collection from all other districts combined. The Chicago District Committee had turned in this money on the personal guarantee of the Executive Secretary that it would be correctly administered and the Executive Secretary would have been untrue to this trust had he permitted this money to fall in the hands of the "majority" of the C. E. C.

Although the "minority" group has the support of the greater part of the party membership, the "majority" of the C. E. C. has secured for its own use a larger part of the funds of the party than is under control of the "minority", when the obligations for loans are deducted. A sum of \$1,000 had been appropriated for a certain purpose but was not used for that purpose and this was returned to the acting secretary for the

"Majority." The Russian Federation had not paid the party for dues stamps sold in December and owed between eight to twelve hundred dollars on this account and this has been paid to the acting secretary of the "Majority." In other words the "Majority" group received approximately \$2,000 of the party funds, whereas over and above loans which it is obligated to repay the "minority" holds about \$1500.

Costs Of Strikes.

A New York bank figures the cost of our 1919 strikes at \$2,000,000,000. Of this total \$750,000,000 is stated as loss in wages, \$1,250,000,000 as loss to the industries. Indirect costs, due to higher prices, higher rents on account of stoppage of building, was not estimated.

These figures are obviously inaccurate, because the normal capitalistic interruptions of production would probably have created a large part of the loss in wages anyhow. There is no free, maximum production under capitalism, so that it is likewise inaccurate to assume a loss of the potential output during the work time lost. For example, the steel industry, in spite of the world needs for steel, was probably ready for a curtailment of production because of the inability of foreign customers to pay or give satisfactory assurances of future payment. The coal industry only operates intermittently under normal conditions, so that the operators likely sustained no losses which are not perhaps to be more than offset by the higher prices.

The significant thing is not the monetary calculation, fundamentally unsound, but the condition of anarchy in the economic system which is indicated by these strikes. The cry is for "arbitration," for "industrial courts," for laws against strikes, for

organization of the middle classes against the organized workers.

The Communists realize that these strikes are an inherent part of capitalism itself, just as imperialistic wars are inherent in capitalism. No mandates, no coercion, no schemes will abate these strikes. — Nothing short of elimination of the root cause, the system of production for profit.

Communism proposes to give to these strikes an affirmative, militant character, directing them to the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism.

New Offensive Against Soviet Russia

(Continued from page 1)

mainstay of reaction and its leader the world over. It is to the British workers therefore that a most important part in this struggle will fall. Let us firmly resolve of us to do our duty.

Be prepared for a general strike against the coming attack on Soviet-Russia.

Answer the Polish - French - American - Finnish - British - Hungarian - Roumanian - Japanese etc. offensive by a mass-movement the world over in all countries and with one common purpose: the rescue of Soviet-Russia and of the world out of the hell of Imperialism unto the new life built up by labor for labor.

For the Amsterdam Sub-Bureau of the IIIrd International

D. J. WYNKOOP

H. ROLAND HOLST

S. J. RUTGERS.

The Coming Elections

(Continued from page 3)

on the ground that it violates the provision in our Party program against making nominations for executives.

But the stubborn fact is that under the conditions of the Presidential elections in general, and under the prevailing conditions of our Party in particular, there can be no real campaign without a Presidential candidate. I would much sooner see no local candidate at all than making no nomination for President. It is absurd, moreover, to argue that our candidate may have to assume responsibility for the acts of the bourgeois state — such an argument makes absurd the Party's conception concerning executive offices.

The Party must discourage becoming so absorbed in a theory as to develop mongers of phrases instead of doers of deeds.

Theory is not action, but the means to action.

Moreover, the nomination of C. E. Ruthenberg (who in every sense is the logical candidate) would be a revolutionary challenge, considering his innumerable arrests and the fact that now there are four indictments against him and prospects of 30 to 40 years in prison — a challenge none the less real because only of moral value.

Active Communist Party participation in the campaign would:

a) prove an enormous agitational factor.

b) Constitute a means of action against him and prospects of 30 to 40 years in prison — a challenge none the less real because only of moral value.

c) Prove of real value as an answer to the reaction and the repression, impart an impulse to the Party's recovery, unify the Party and contribute to making it an aggressive factor in the struggle.

The Communist Party is in a favorable or unfavorable position — accordingly—to the measure in which it combines concepts and practice, theory and realism.

Not a single opportunity for struggle must be avoided. Not a single means of action in accord with our tasks and our principles must be missed. The test of a Party's revolutionary integrity is not the formal, mechanical adherence to a Program, but the capacity to use programs for purposes of revolutionary action.

Berlin — March 10, 1900.

The Counter-Revolution in Germany

Berlin — March 28.

By Louis C. Fraina

THE Ebert-Noske-Bauer Government, shorn of Noske and Bauer, is again in power. The streets are still a mass of barbed-wire entanglements erected by the counter-revolutionary troops against the Government and now used by the Government against the revolutionary masses; Government troops, armed with rifles, sheath-bayonets and hand-grenades, patrol the streets prepared to shoot down the workers (scores have already been shot) — the identical troops that did not fire a shot in defense of the city against the counter-revolutionary invasion of Luttwitz-Kapp. The old apathy is again dominant in the streets of Berlin — that cold, hopeless apathy which immediately impresses the observer in Germany. In the "high life" districts, in Unter den Linden and Friedrichstrasse, the swirl of frightful gaiety again rushes on; while in the proletarian districts there is sullen resentment, tempered by partial anticipations of a new struggle.

Five days ago it appeared as if this new struggle might start immediately. The proletariat of Berlin was still on strike, in spite of the Ebert Government and the trades union bureaucracy having issued orders to end the strike. In city after city the workers used the opportunity of the crisis to usurp power, developing the General Strike beyond the limit imposed upon it as a strike in defense of the Government. In Westphalia and the Rhineland, in the Ruhr mining districts, the working class, while not yet wholly clear on means and purposes, was in complete control, seizing government power and organizing an active Red Army of 30,000 men, with 50,000 in reserve. But, for reasons which will develop later, these hopes are now a thing of the past; the Government is preparing an offensive against the Red Army, which has been compelled to accept an armistice: disaster and massacre will come in the Ruhr.

These are the inescapable facts of the situation: the Ebert Government is in power, but the military *coup d'état* has partially conquered since it has compelled the Government to compromise and move more to the Right; the Government is withdrawing its concessions, or rather its promises of concessions to the masses; the interests behind the military *coup* are securing concessions as against the proletariat which rallied to the Government's defense; the Government is compelled to rely more than ever on military force; while the Cabinet is being reconstructed according to the policy of the Right and not according to the demands of the Left. The proposal of the Independent Socialist Party for a "Socialist Government" (Cabinet coalition of Independents and Social

Democrats) has been contemptuously rejected — a rejection accompanied by a new Terror. The Socialist-bourgeois Government having and choose between the proletariat and the reaction, again chose reaction.

The revolutionary crisis produced by the military *coup*, developing conditions for the final struggle for power, is being converted into a Cabinet-parliamentary crisis, with the Independent Socialist Party manipulating the situation to secure Cabinet concessions and parliamentary power: the Independents having, all through the crisis, acted not with an eye to the revolutionary seizure of power, but with an eye to (1) the reconstruction of the Cabinet on a "Socialist" basis, and (2) the coming elections in which they anticipate becoming the majority Party; while the Communist Party of Germany (as represented by the Reichs-Zentrale) is assisting the conversion of the revolutionary crisis into a parliamentary crisis by not measuring up to the requirements of the situation and by rendering criminally opportunist encouragement to the Independents in their proposal for a "Socialist" Government.

And the masses? The masses are stirring uneasily, baffled and betrayed; and they may yet, under the pressure of events, initiate a new struggle, compelling the *hesitants* and the moderates to accept revolutionary action.

1 — The Collapse of Democracy

The Ebert-Bauer-Noske Government was directly responsible for the military *coup d'état*. The *coup* was made by troops recently returned from the Baltic provinces, where the Government allowed a concentration of the most reactionary troops of the old German army for use against the Revolution and against Soviet Russia — troops which, with the connivance of the Socialist Government, surreptitiously assisted Col. Avalaff-Bermont in his counter-revolutionary campaign against Petrograd. The *coup* had been discussed for months and open preparations made; but the Government did nothing. On March 11 General von Luttwitz met President Ebert in Conference and issued an ultimatum, but von Luttwitz was not placed under arrest; while Noske, actively or compliantly, allowed the reactionary troops to prepare their *coup*. Late in the evening of March 12 Noske issued a statement that the fears of the Left concerning a military *coup* were unfounded — six or seven hours later 10,000 troops invade Berlin to the strains of martial music and the plaudits of a crowd; the Government troops firing not a single shot in defense of the city, while the Government itself fled in an automobile...

There was no power of resistance in the Government — no resistance in democracy and the parliamentary regime. Aggressive and relentless against the proletarian revolution, the Government was weaker than a woman's tears against the counter-revolution. Democracy and the Government had been compelled to rely upon the most reactionary forces, upon the military of the old regime. Democracy and the Government did not act uncompromisingly against the military, since antagonizing or weakening the military meant weakening the basis of their own power; hence the Government supinely allowed the preparations for a *coup* to proceed. A revolutionary Government would have answered the threat of von Luttwitz to march upon Berlin by mobilizing the armed proletariat and by general arrests of reactionaries, by mass-Terror against the bourgeois Junker reaction; but the Socialist-bourgeois Government had disarmed the proletariat, while aggressive measures against the reaction would have meant an open break with the Right, and the collapse of the Government under pressure of Right and Left. At a meeting of the National Assembly on March 18, Socialist Chancellor Bauer said: "After mature deliberation the Government decided not to enter into a bloody struggle with the Kapp upstarts, and therefore determined to leave Berlin, thereby avoiding violence." (Against the Communists there never was any thought of "avoiding violence"! But that is miserable equivocation. The Government had at its disposal in Berlin alone 30,000 troops and 50,000 armed civilians, and about 300,000 in all Germany; yet the Government evaded a struggle with 10,000 counter-revolutionary troops. Why? Because the Government knew that its troops, reliable in crushing a Communist uprising, were completely unreliable as means of defense against a reactionary uprising. Moreover, an open military struggle would compel the Government to arm the proletariat, thereby developing the forces of proletarian revolution. The Government, accordingly, chose to retreat and compromise; never for a moment did the Socialist Government of Ebert, Noske and Bauer forget the menace of a proletarian revolution; concession to the Right rather than permit the revolutionary proletariat to conquer!

Democracy and the parliamentary regime, acclaimed as the final symbols of the Revolution and the means to Socialism, broke in pieces. Democracy? It was, in the persons of the Government, fleeing to Dresden in an automobile; and there issuing proclamations about law and order, right and the constitution — at a moment when the issue was power against power and might against might. The Parliament, the National Assembly?

It was dispersed as chaff before the wind by the bayonets of the Luttwitz troops; the Reichstag, where the Assembly met, now as imposingly empty and impotent as democracy itself, was guarded by three soldiers, while children played upon its steps — an appropriate memorial to Karl Kautsky...

The National Assembly dispersed, issued its defiance to the military coup, spoke of democracy and right, of law and the constitution, decided to convene in Stuttgart — and exercised scarcely any influence upon the march of events. The National Assembly, which approvingly observed the butchery of the workers on January 13, now, on March 13, was incapable of mustering either the moral or physical energy to resist counter-revolution.

The representatives of petty bourgeois democracy fulminated threats against the military coup, but the democracy itself was apathetic. Even where hostile, democracy had no means of its own for action against the counter-revolution. Moreover, for this democracy to act decisively against the counter-revolutionary troops meant precipitating a struggle within the military forces of the nation, to disrupt the power which maintained the ascendancy of democracy. The petty bourgeois democracy, accordingly, adopted a policy of "watchful waiting" and "neutrality," which under the circumstances assisted the counter-revolution — democracy did not defend itself against the Right, with whom it could merge; while preparing to maintain itself against the Left, with whom there could be neither compromise nor merger. It might be unpleasant for the military reaction to conquer, but a satisfactory agreement could be arranged.

This, then, was the consequence of the Socialism of the Social Democratic Party — that, in affirming democracy as the means to Socialism, it developed means for the ascendancy of Junker - Capitalism, thereby directly promoting the coming of military counter-revolution.

And after 15 months of murdering the proletariat and Socialism, the Government and the Social Democratic Party were compelled to call upon the proletariat to act against its own creation, the military counter-revolution.

2—Developments of the Crisis.

In choosing the alternative of a General Strike the Government and the Social-Democratic Party were fully aware of the fact that the Strike might develop beyond the limits imposed upon it as a strike in defense of democracy and the Government. But the Government was equally aware that it might depend upon the military in the event of the strike assuming revolutionary proportions, and, moreover, the Government, simultaneously with the call for a General Strike — issued in the name of Ebert, Bauer, Noske, Muller and David (Noske afterwards denied subscribing to the

call) — prepared measures to prevent the General Strike becoming revolutionary. In the Ruhr District, for example, revolutionary and under a state of martial law, the Strike was consciously limited, and it did not become a General Strike until March 17, when the struggle was no longer against the military coup but against the Socialist-bourgeois Government.

In accepting the alternative of a General Strike the Government, moreover, simply "legalized" and accomplished fact, since the masses acted independently of the Government.

On Saturday March 13 the General Strike was proclaimed in Berlin by the trade unions, the Social Democratic Party and the Independent Socialist Party. All three proclamations agreed in fundamentals — strike against the coup, in defense of democracy; the Independents juggled with revolutionary phrases in characteristic style, but proposed no definite revolutionary measures; while the trades unions spoke of the "legal" Government being menaced by the coup, of the danger of reaction being restored in state and shops, of the Republic being in danger. There was no clear call to revolutionary action, not even from the Communist Party which, on Saturday, declared against the General Strike on the assumption that the military coup and the Government were identical.

The response of the proletariat to the General Strike was immediate and complete; in Berlin, the struggle immediately and completely assumed the character of a proletarian struggle against the military-bourgeois reaction.

The situation in Berlin was most characteristic of the general situation in Germany. The collapse of the Government was complete; there was not a trace of this authority or its resistance... Herr Kapp occupied the Chancellery; while General von Luttwitz installed himself in the Ministry of war from whence Comrade Noske had issued orders of death against the Communist proletariat. This Government district, now a fortress of barbed wire entanglements, machine guns and artillery, opens on the Tiergarten where, fifteen months ago, Karl Liebknecht urged the proletariat to Revolution; while three streets beyond is the turgid canal into which the assassins of the Socialist Government cast the mutilated body of Rosa Luxemburg... The National Army either retired to its barracks or fraternized with the counter-revolutionary troops. The Noske Guards, insolently active in all the streets of Berlin the day before, now scurried to cover, and did not appear again until the struggle against the revolutionary masses started. The Einwohnerwehr (literally, Guards of the Inhabitants, civilian White Guards) issued a declaration of neutrality (neutrality under the circumstances meaning assistance to the counter-revolution) while emphasizing its readiness to march against "plunderers," that is to say, against the

proletariat; and it did march to action when the General Strike began to threaten "law and order" and the struggle developed against the Government.

As against these open and masked forces of counter-revolution, the proletariat on General Strike was alone. It was clearly, emphatically the working class against all. The paralysis of industry, of most public activity, was complete; it was as if a giant mass of ice pressed down upon the city. The Kapp-Luttwitz Government was isolated; its troops occupied the streets, but the proletariat closed the factories, halted railway and street car traffic, and kept the city unlighted at night. The Kapp-Luttwitz dictatorship issued innumerable proclamations about right and the constitution, bread and liberty, — but the iron answer of the proletariat mocked it all; the Kapp-Luttwitz dictatorship styled itself the "Government of labor," — but there was no labor; the Kapp-Luttwitz dictatorship issued threats against the profiteers, — but this did not worry the profiteers, while the General Strike did; the Kapp-Luttwitz dictatorship issued a decree providing death for strikers and strike directors, — but the General Strike implacably persisted. All Government authority, "legal" and "illegal," was now a myth in comparison with the reality and the might of the General Strike.

The struggle of the proletariat in Berlin was, objectively, a revolutionary struggle. But, unfortunately, only in an objective sense. The proletariat was unarmed, while its representatives manifested neither revolutionary initiative nor political capacity. The fundamental task was to issue the call and develop measures for the arming of the proletariat; no such call was issued or measures adopted during the first four days of the General Strike — the decisive period, during which the basis had to be laid for all subsequent action.

But elsewhere the revolutionary struggle flared up. Where the workers were armed they initiated a struggle for power, and usurped power; in other places they disarmed the troops as a preliminary to the struggle for power. In city after city Soviet Republics were proclaimed; while in the Ruhr a giant revolutionary struggle loomed threateningly. Among these workers the military coup was a call to action, the opportunity to conquer power. It was the elemental action of the masses breaking loose, in spite of the dangers, in spite of the Party moderates and compromisers. These vital developments indicated that both the reaction and the Revolution had completely underestimated the German proletariat; the Reaction, — its capacity to resist a military dictatorship; the Revolution, — its will to engage in the struggle for power.

The menace of Bolshevism, which the Kapp-Luttwitz dictatorship in its

first proclamation had projected as a bogey, was now a real menace. To continue the struggle between the Government and the coup meant to prepare the conditions for the revolutionary conquest of power by the proletariat. What was necessary now was agreement and compromise, unity against the Revolution. The danger was very real. Hindenburg appealed to Kapp-Luttwitz to withdraw from Berlin, and to the Government for compromise and agreement. Now the strategy of the Socialist-bourgeois Government was apparent — in avoiding the decisive military struggle against the coup, the opportunity was provided for agreement and unity against the Revolution. The opportunity was seized at the earliest moment.

It is a fact, in spite of denials, that the Government was negotiating with the Kapp-Luttwitz dictatorship. On Wednesday these negotiations resulted in an agreement. On Monday the Kapp-Luttwitz dictatorship had announced negotiations, and stated its conditions: "Elections to be held two months hence for the Reichstag and the Prussian Landtag; a new President to be elected, the former President to be requested to continue office until the elections." This declaration was denied by the Government and the National Assembly; but the agreement was concluded two days later, practically on the Kapp-Luttwitz conditions. On Wednesday the Kapp-Luttwitz coup declared that, having accomplished its mission, the old Government agreeing (1) that elections should be held within two months and (2) election of the President to be by direct vote of the people, it would withdraw. This was not accomplishing the program of the coup, but it was a partial victory; and, moreover, the Kapp-Luttwitz troops withdrew from Berlin with all the honors of war, to the strains of martial music and assisted in their evacuation by the Government troops; carrying with them, moreover, an enormous mass of captured munitions. A proclamation characterized the agreement in this fashion: "After long negotiations between the representatives of the Government parties and representatives of both Right parties (which had recognized the Kapp-Luttwitz dictatorship), especially between representatives Trimborn, Sudekum, Stressman and Hergt, the following compromise has been reached: The representatives of the majority parties will advocate elections to the National Assembly to take place not later than June; that the President be elected by the people, that the National Government will undergo a change in the near future; the carrying on of the business of Government in Berlin to be taken over by vice-Chancellor Schiffer." At 12:15 Thursday morning, Schiffer issued a proclamation in the name of the Government, designating General Select as commander of the troops and calling for restoration of economic and political activity. (A

joint proclamation by Schiffer and Hirsch (Social Democrat) in the name of the National and Prussian Governments declared it was false to accuse the National Army and the Security (Noske) troops of offering no resistance to the coup, and has this delicious bit: "It is not commonly known that on the night of Friday-Saturday (March 12-13) the troops stood at their posts ready to defend the Government; but, because of the difficult conditions of night fighting, they were, before the advance of the rebels, re-called to barracks"!)

Simultaneously with the conclusion of the compromise, the Government and the bourgeois parties issued the slogan: "Back to work!" The paralysis of the economic activity united with the menace of Bolshevism to compel a compromise. But the proletariat of Berlin rejected the call to end the strike, the trades unions and the Social Democratic Party being compelled to order the strike to proceed against the compromise.

The General Strike was now, in its impulse and in the mood of the masses, a Strike against the Government. But, in the conscious direction imparted to it by the trades union bureaucracy and S. D. P., the strike was against the compromise of the Government — purposely or stupidly evading the problem, in that the compromise was not in a formal agreement but in the prevailing situation itself; the Government might repudiate the formal agreement but would inevitably be compelled to compromise, as actually did happen.

The compromise agreed upon by the Government and the military coup, the masses persisting in the General Strike, now in fact a Strike against the Government, — these developments emphasized the inherent character of the crisis, as developing the conditions and providing the opportunity for the definite Communist struggle for power.

It was clear to all that the continuation of the General Strike was latent with the threat of proletarian revolution. On Thursday and Friday the citizens of Berlin acted as in mortal terror; the words Spartacus, Arbeiter, Unabhaengigen, were on all tongues and the basis of discussion in all crowds. At night, store and hotels were barred and people ordered off the streets: terror was rampant in Berlin. The Government troops now occupied the entrenchments erected by the Kapp-Luttwitz troops and new entrenchments were erected. Riots were frequent, the Government troops using rifles and machine guns at the least pretext; in three days more persons were shot by the Government troops than in the five days of the Kapp-Luttwitz dictatorship. In the proletariat a new energy manifested itself, a developing consciousness of larger means and purposes. But the General Strike did not move to Revolution; nor was it the masses who were not ready, but the representatives of the masses...

Never were the limitations of the General Strike in itself more apparent than in Berlin. The Strike was complete; for eight days not a factory nor a car was in motion. But in spite of all this, the strike broke and dispersed after unsatisfactory promises of concessions by the Government...

There are six aspects in the revolutionary conception of the General Strike:

1—A General Strike, if complete, must include the whole working class; but this temporary unity, while inspiring, is deceptive, since all groups in the working class are not in implaceable opposition to Capitalism (officials, aristocracy of labor, trades union bureaucracy). The unity temporarily of fundamentally irreconcilable elements in a General Strike means that at a particular moment these elements will split apart and break the Strike. It is necessary, accordingly, to mobilize independently the potentially revolutionary forces — the industrial proletariat, the unskilled workers.

2—The limitations of the General Strike in itself are innumerable; unless it ceases being a strike it must break and disperse, since a General Strike presses more heavily on the proletariat than on the bourgeoisie — for example, the bourgeoisie can feed itself much more easily than the proletariat.

3—A revolutionary General Strike, accordingly, must cease being a Strike and become a revolution, mobilize itself for the seizure of political power.

4—The seizure of power implies breaking the military might of the bourgeois state; it is necessary, therefore, to arm the proletariat.

5—All that a General Strike can accomplish is to create temporary economic and political demoralization, making a breach in the old order through which the proletariat can break through for the conquest of power, its moral and physical energy, enthusiasm and mass consciousness being aroused by the General Strike.

6—A General Strike may become a revolution. But there must be adequate revolutionary leadership to formulate, at the start, the moral and physical measures which become the basis of action at the stage of the General Strike developing conditions of revolution.

None of these conditions were met. The fright of the bourgeois dissolved in smiles of satisfaction. The treachery of the moderates and the incapacity of the revolutionists prevented the General Strike becoming Revolution...

But should the Strike persist, danger would come: complete economic chaos and more revolutionary vigor. The Government, accordingly, again compromised; it repudiated the Schiffer "Intermediate" Government and established itself in Berlin. The trades union bureaucracy met the Government in conference; a compromise was agreed upon (to be re-

puddied by the Government in two days); and two hours after this conference Legien and other reactionary union officials issued an order to end the General Strike (the conference ended at 5 o'clock Saturday morning, and at 7:05 the proclamation calling off the Strike was issued). The same day the Independent Socialist Party (Speaking through Crispian in "Freiheit") also urged ending the General Strike.

The situation on Saturday may be summarized:

1—The trades union bureaucracy, moderate, treacherous, and itself as much in fear of a revolution as the Government, broke the Central Strike. This bureaucracy, petty bourgeois to the marrow, yearned for "tranquility." The conditions of the unions were moderate, vague and general, capable of easy "interpretation" and repudiation: immediate disarmament and punishment of participants in the military coup; clearing the Government of reactionaries; new laws for equality of workers and officials (!); immediate socialization of industries ripe for socialization (now urged by the moderates for more than a year); drastic action against profiteers, if necessary by expropriation. Two interesting conditions were: 1) "Representatives of the Government parties will defend the right of the workers' organizations to participate in the reconstruction of the Government, the unions to have a decisive influence. 2) Dissolution of all reactionary military formations which have acted against the constitution, and their replacement by reliable Republicans, especially from workers, employees and officials without neglecting any profession." Magnificent evasions of the problem of power! As if even these moderate conditions could be secured by compromise agreements and paper concessions, and not by means of conquest of power!

2—The Independent Socialist Party acquiesced in ending the General Strike while calling upon the Government to arm the proletariat — as if the Government would cut its own throat. It issued other demands which were either miserable compromises or else incapable of accomplishment without the conquest of power. But, most characteristic and miserable of all, the Independent Socialist Party issued the call for a "Socialist Government" — the exclusion of the bourgeois parties from the Cabinet, which was now to consist of Social Democrats, Independents and representatives of the trades unions. This was the final compromise of compromises — coalition with the assassins of the proletariat and the Revolution as a means of expressing the Revolution and the proletariat.

3—The Left Wing Independents and the Communist Party repudiated the call to end the General Strike. Continue the General Strike — for what? Against the Government's compromise with Luttwitz-Kapp?

But that compromise was in the objective facts of the situation, not in any formal agreement. Against the Government? But that meant a revolutionary struggle for power. Neither the Communist Party nor the Left Independents, however, were prepared to engage in this struggle: the Left Independents because of their affiliation with the Independent Socialist Party; the Communist Party because it affirmed that the proletariat was not ready for the seizure of power. There was issued neither a definite call to revolutionary action nor a definite revolutionary program. Moreover, the disastrous character of the situation was emphasized by both the Left Independents and the Communist Party acquiescing in the Independent Socialist Party proposal for a "Socialist Government." The Left Independents accepted the proposal enthusiastically, prepared to participate in such a Government; the Communist Party, through its Reichs-Zentrale, declared it would wage only "loyal opposition" to such a Government — a declaration which perfectly satisfied the Independents and which they interpreted as approval. This was the final and worst mistake of a series of mistakes: it completely smashed any prospects of revolutionary action developing out of the General Strike.

Betrayed by the S. D. P. and the trades union bureaucracy, missing the urge of revolutionary direction and inspiration, the General Strike was on the verge of breaking. The non-proletarian elements in the working class immediately acquiesced in the order to end the strike; but large masses of the proletariat rejected the order. On Saturday and Sunday, while the representatives of the masses hesitated and compromised, the masses were again in a mood for action. The call for Soviets might have met response; but while the Communist Party issued this call, the Left Independents issued the call for elections of revolutionary Betriebs-Rate (Factory Councils, economic Soviets); and the C. P. acquiesced in the call. The Communist Party, as represented in its Reich-Zentrale, met the retribution of its incapacity: it might now issue the necessary revolutionary slogans, but these would not meet response, since the Communist Party had developed neither the moral energy nor the revolutionary enthusiasm of the masses; while these revolutionary slogans were now vitiated by the Zentrale's compromises with the Independents. Undoubtedly it was too late to initiate now an immediate and successful struggle for seizure of power; but the Communist Party owed it to itself and the Revolution to come clean of compromise, to formulate measures and action calculated to develop moral reserves for action in the days to come...

On Monday the representatives of the revolutionary Betriebs-Rate elected the previous day met in the General Assembly. Large numbers of

workers had returned to work; but large masses were still on strike, the Betriebs-Rate Assembly itself representing 500,000 workers. The Assembly, dominated by the Independents, decided to "interrupt" the General Strike, the Communists urging continuing the Strike, but the Independents carried the day. The "interruption" of a General Strike as a revolutionary tactic depends upon circumstances; unless it is adopted at a moment when the Strike is at the crest of its power, but conditions make it impossible to conquer, hence it becomes necessary to secure a period for new preparations, — "interrupting" a strike is simply a cover for defeat. Under the prevailing condition, this manœuvre was characteristic of the Independents.

The Communist Party opposed this "interruption" of the General Strike, and rightly. Even now, considering the general situation and particularly the intense revolutionary struggle in the Ruhr, continuation of the Strike two or three days more would have disorganized Capitalism and the state, might have developed a new struggle, and encouraged the Ruhr proletariat.

But the General Strike was "interrupted." And from the Ruhr proletariat, waging a magnificent struggle and menaced on all fronts, came the searing cry of "Treason!" hurled at the representatives proletariat of Berlin.

(To be continued)

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